

Message Text

SECRET

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ACTION SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 CCO-00 CIAE-00 USSS-00 FBIE-00

/026 W

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Z O 111300Z NOV 74 ZFF-6

FM AMEMBASSY BEIRUT

TO SECSTATE WASHDC FLASH 1243

USMISSION USUN NEW YORK FLASH

INFO AMEMBASSY CAIRO IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY RABAT IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY TUNIS IMMEDIATE

USINT ALGIERS I MEDIATE

AMEMBASSY ABU DHABI IMMEDIATE

S E C R E T SECTION 1 OF 2 BEIRUT 13454

EXDIS

EO 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR PLO UNGA XF

SUBJ: PLO DELEGATION TO UNGA

REF: BEIRUT

13407

SUMMARY: 'ARAFAT'S SECURITY ADVISER AND PERSONAL AIDE, ALI HASSAN SALAMEH (ABU HASSAN), THIS MORNING REQUESTED QUICK ISSUANCE OF VISAS TO 12-MA RPT 12-MAN DDELEGATION ACCOMPANYI G 'ARAEAT TO NEW YORK, AND MADE STRONG PLEA THAT USG PERMIT 'ARAFAT AND AT LEAST THREE OF HIS PLO SECURITY GUARDS TO CARRY PERSONAL WEAPONS WHILE ON US SOIL. EMBOFF CAROLAN AGREED REFER HIS REQUEETS TO DEPT (GIST TELEPHONED TO UNP/KRIEBEL 0900ZULU), BUT EREW SALAMEH'S ATTENTION TO PROBABILITY THAT DEADLINE SET BY PLO FOR VISA ISSUANCE (1430ZULU NOV 11) WOULD BE EXTREMELY DIFFICULT TO MEET,, PAR-
TICULARLY IN VIEW OF MAJOR PROBLEMS WHICH PLO INSISTENCE ON BRINGING

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FIREARMS INTO US WILL CAUSE

FOR USG. SALAMEH BEGGED FOR UNDER-
STANDING AND FLEXIBILITY ON PART
OF USG IN OVERCOMING THIS AND OTHER PROBLEMS AND IN HELPING TO
DISPEL ERRONEOUS NOTION (ALREADY TAKING SHAPE IN 'ARAFAT'S MIND)
THAT USG IS GIVING HIM THE RUN-AROUND IN ORDER "SABOTAGE" HIS
APPEARANCE AT UNGA. EMBOFF STRONGLY REMONSTRATED THAT SUCH NOTION
ENTIRELY UNWARRANTED, THAT USG HAS BENT OVER BACKWARDS -- DESPITE
TIME WASTED IN DEALING THROUGH GOE IN CAIRO
-- TRYING TO LEARN
'ARAFAT'S TRAVEL PLANS
AND ENSURE HIS SECURITY IN NEW YORK, AND
THAT 'ARAFAT SHOULD REFRAIN FROM COMING OUT WITH PUBLIC DENUNCIATION
OF OUR EFFORTS UNTIL WE HAVE HAD TIME TO CONSIDER AND SORT OUT
LATEST PLO REQUESTS. SALAMEH UNDERTOOK TO DO HIS BEST IN LATTER
REGARD AND WAS HEARTENED TO LEARN THAT VISAS COULD BE ISSUED TO
'ARAFAT'S PARTY DURING ANY OF THEIR STOPOVERS (DAMASCUS, CAIRO AND
PERHAPS TUNIS, ALGIERS OR RABAT) EN ROUTE TO NEW YORK. END SUMMARY.

1. IN FOUR-HOUR MEETING WITH SALAMEH AT EMBASSY MORNING NOV 11, WE
WERE ASTOUNDED TO LEARN THAT EMBASSY CAIRO'S BEST EFFORTS TO GAIN--
VIA EGYPTIAN GOVT -- PLO ACQUIESCENCE IN RESTRICTING SIZE OF
'ARAFAT'S DEL AND TO MAKE CLEAR THAT NO RPT NO FIREARMS COULD BE
CARRIED BY ANY PLO REP ON US SOIL HAD MADE ABSOLUTELY
NO IMPACT. (WE ARE AT LOSS TO EXPLAIN WHY, BUT WE SUSPECT MAIN

FAULT LIES WITH GOE.)

2. IN ANY EVENT, WE INFORMED SALAMEH
OF USG INSISTENCE THAT 18-
MAN DEL PROPOSED TO ACCOMPANY 'ARAFAT TO NEW YORK BE REDUCED TO
3 RPT 3 AIDES AND 4 RPT 4 SECURITY PERSONNEL, AND THAT NONE OF
THEM -- INCLUDING 'ARAFAT -- WOULD BE ALLOWED TO ENTER US BEARING
ARMS. SALAMEH PURPORTED TO BE HORRIFIED, REPORTING THAT 'ARAFAT
HAS ALREADY DEVELOPED NOTION THAT USG IS TRYING FORCE HIM INTO
CHANGING HIS MIND RE APPEARING AT UNGA BY DELAYING ISSUANCE OF
VISAS TO HIS PARTY AND BY "DEMEANING" HIS PRIDE AND SELF-IMAGE

BEFORE WORLD PUBLIC OPINION.

3. EMBOFF SAID THIS WAS HOG-WASH, POINTING OUT THAT USG HAS BENT
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OVER BACKWARDS, FOR MANY DAYS TRYING TO LEARN 'ARAFAT'S TRAVEL
PLANS AND IN PLANNING UNPRECEDENTED SECURITY PRECAUTIONS SOLELY
FOR HIS PROTECTION IN NEW YORK. AFTER CONSIDERABLE DISCUSSION,
SALAMEH MORE OR LESS AGREED, BUT HE MADE STRONG REQUEST THAT
USG ACCEPT AND ISSUE VISAS THIS AFTERNOON (BY 1430ZULU) FOR A
12-MAN RPT 12-MAN DELEGATION TO ACCOMPANY 'ARAFAT, AND THAT IT
ALLOW 'ARAFAT AND SIX -- OR AT VERY MINIMUM THREE -- OF HIS BODY-
GUARDS TO CARRY THEIR PERSONAL WEAPONS WHILE IN US. EMBOFF

NOTED THAT USG HAS VEHEMENT OBJECTIONS TO LATTER AS MATTER OF PRINCIPLE, THAT THERE NO PRECEDENT FOR SUCH A STEP, AND THAT, IN ANY EVENT, OUR OWN SECURITY PRECAUTIONS IN NEW YORK MAKE IT WHOLLY UNNECESSARY.

SALAMEH RESPONDED THAT FIDEL CASTRO HAD APPEARED ARMED IN NEW YORK. HE SAID THAT, IN ANY CASE, 'ARAFAT IS BY NOW SO SENSITIVE TO WHAT HE IMAGINES TO BE SLIGHTS TO HIS "PRESTIGE" THAT HE IS LIKELY TO REGARD THIS AND OTHER RESTRICTIONS SET FORTH STATE 237827 AS INTOLERABLE "PSYCHOLOGICAL" AFFRONT AND TO ACCUSE USG PUBLICLY OF TORPEDOING HIS VISIT TO US. FACT THAT WE HAVE ALREADY ISSUED 'ARAFAT'S OWN VISA, SAID SALAMEH, CAUSES HIM TO SUSPECT USG IS "SETTING HIM UP" IN ORDER FOR US TO CLAIM LATER THAT WE HAD NOT RE-FUSED VISA TO 'ARAFAT AD THEREFORE COULD NOT BE ACCUSED OF OBSTRUCTING HIS VISIT TO UNGA. EMBOFF DISMISSED THIS NOTION AS TOTALLY RIDICULOUS, BUT SALAMEH RUEFULLY INSISTED THIS IS THE WAY 'ARAFAT THINKS.

4. SALAMEH, AFTER MUCH TELEPHONING TO 'ARAFAT AND KHALIL AL WAZIR (ABU JIHAD), FINALLY IDENTIFIED 12-MAN DELEGATION WHICH PLO PROPOSES ACCOMPANY 'ARAFAT TO NEW YORK. (LIST BEING SUBMITTED SEPTTEL.) IT INCLUDES TEN RPT TEN PERSONS ALREADY LISTED CAIRO 8995, BUT ADDS TWO PERSONS -- MOUSTAFA HASSANI AND JALAL TAWHID MOUSSA AHMED-- WHOSE NAMES WERE NOT ON THAT LIST. JALAL AHMED'S NAME WAS ADDED SUBSEQUENT TO CAROLAN-KRIEBEL TELEPHONE CONVERSATION, AND THREE RPT THREE OTHER PERSONS WHOSE NAMES WERE GIVEN BY CAROLAN TO KRIEBEL WERE REPLACED BY OTHERS WHO WERE LISTED IN CAIRO 8995. (RECOMMENDATION: THAT DEPT PROCESS NAMES LISTED SEPTTEL ON EMERGENCY RPT EMERGENCY BASIS AND, ASSUMING 12-MAN DEL (INSTEAD OF 7-MAN DEL SUGGESTED STATE 247827) IS SATISFACTORY, AUTHORIZE ISSUANCE OF VISAS BY FLASH CABLE.)

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ACTION SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CCO-00 SSO-00 CIAE-00 USSS-00 FBIE-00

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Z O 111300Z NOV 74 ZFF-6
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TO SECSTATE WASHDC FLASH 1244
USMISSION USUN NEW YORK FLASH
INFO AMEMBASSY CAIRO IMMEDIATE AAOH
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USINT ALGIERS IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY ABU DHABI IMMEDIATE

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EXDIS

5. EMBOFF TOLD SALAMEH WE WOULD RAISE QUESTION OF FIREARMS WITH
DEPT, BUT THAT PLO SHOULD EXPECT NO ENTHUSIASM FROM USG ON THAT
SCORE. SALAMEH PLEADED FOR OUR UNDERSTANDING IN HELPING 'ARAFAT
TO OVERCOME
HIS "PSYCHOLOGICAL" PROBLEMS, AND WE TOLD HIM USG
HAS ITS OWN PSYCHOLOGICAL HANG-UPS RE ALLOWING FOREIGN
REVOLUTIONARIES TO BEAR ARMS IN FULL VIEW OF AMERICAN PUBLIC.
SALAMEH DID NOT INDICATE CLEARLY WHAT 'ARAFAT'S REACTION WOULD

BE IF OUR BAN ON WEAPONS IS MAINTAINED, BUT HE HINTED IT MIGHT
STILL CAUSE 'ARAFAT TO ABANDON IDEA OF GOING TO NEW YORK AND TO
TRY TO STICK USG WITH THE BLAME. AS FAR AS AIRPORT CLEARANCE OF
ACCOMPANYING BAGGAGE IS CONCERNED, SALAMEH SAID THIS WOULD
PRESENT NO PROBLEM
AS LONG AS X-RAY INSPECTIONS WERE PERFORMED
OUT OF SIGHT OF INCOMING PLO DELEGATION.

6. EMBOFF MADE STRONG PITCH FOR PLO TO CONVEY 12 NAMES LISTED
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SEPTTEL TO SAADAT HASSAN IN NEW YORK FOR SUBMISSION TO UNSYG.
SALAMEH SAID THIS WOULD BE DONE, BUT HE FEARED THAT HASSAN --
WHO IS ALREADY IN BAD ORDER WITH PLO LEADERSHIP FOR HIS INEFFECTIVE
PERFORMANCE OVER
PAST FEW DAYS -- MAY GOOF UP OR DELAY THIS
REQUIREMENT UNDULY.

7. COMMENTING FURTHER ON 'ARAFAT'S TRAVEL PLANS, SALAMEH INDICATED
THAT ENTIRE PARTY PLANS DEPART DAMASCUS BY AIR THIS AFTERNOON

(N

V 21) AT 1400ZULU FOR CAIRO, WHERE THEY EXPECT TO BOARD
SPECIAL PLANE FOR FLIGHT TO NEW YORK. AS NOTED REFTEL, HE

EXPECTS PARTY TO ARRIVE
NEW YORK DURING EARLY MORNING HOURS NOV
13. SALAMEH INDICATED THAT ONE OR MORE STOPOVERS WILL LIKELY

BE MADE BETWEEN CAIRO AND NEW YORK -- AT TUNIS, ALGIERS AND/OR

RABAT. HE WAS VISIBLY RELIEVED WHEN INFORMED THAT, IF NECESSARY, US
VISAS COULD BE ISSUED TO PARTY AT ANY ONE OF THOSE PLACES. ON
BASIS OF THIS, PLUS OUR ASSURANCE THAT USG WOULD DO ITS BEST
TO PROVE ITSELF -- ONCE AGAIN -- HELPFUL AND FORTHCOMING,
SALAMEH SAID HE THOUGHT HE COULD RESTRAIN 'ARAFAT FROM ABANDONING
HIS VISIT TO UNGA AND DENOUNCING USG AS ANTI-PALESTINIAN.

8. COMMENT: WE REALIZE THAT SALAMEH, DESPITE
HIS APPARENT DESIRE TO BE "REASONABLE" AND TO EXERT RESTRAINING
INFLUENCE
ON 'ARAFAT, IS INVOLVED IN EFFORT TO BLACKMAIL USG
INTO ACCEDING TO 'ARAFAT'S "PSYCHOLOGICAL" DEMANDS OR RISK
MAJOR UPROAR THAT WOULD ALMOST CERTAINLY PROVE DAMAGING

TO WHAT FAVORABLE PROSPECTS EXIST FOR CONSTRUCTIVE POLITICAL

OUTCOME OF UPCOMING UNGA DEBATE. IN INTEREST OF ENHANCING
THOSE PROSPECTS, WE HOPE USG CAN SET ASIDE ITS UNDERSTANDABLE
IRRITATION

OVER THIS LATEST EXAMPLE OF PLO UPPITINESS, PARANOIA
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AND SILLINESS AND,
IN SO DOING, COME AT LEAST PART WAY
TOWARD MEETING SALAMEH'S REQUESTS NOTED ABOVE. (ONE FINAL NOTE:
SALAMEH WAS AWARE OF ABORTIVE EFFORT TO OBTAIN VISAS UNDER
FALSE PRETENSES FOR 15 PALESTINIANS IN ABU DHABI. HE SAID THIS
HAD BEEN RESULT OF INITIATIVE TAKEN WITHOUT 'ARAFAT'S KNOWLEDGE
BY SOME FEDAYEEN "IDIOT" AND CHARACTERIZED WHOLE AFFAIR AS
"STUPID".
GODLEY

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